

The RISE and FALL of the TRIGAN EMPIRE

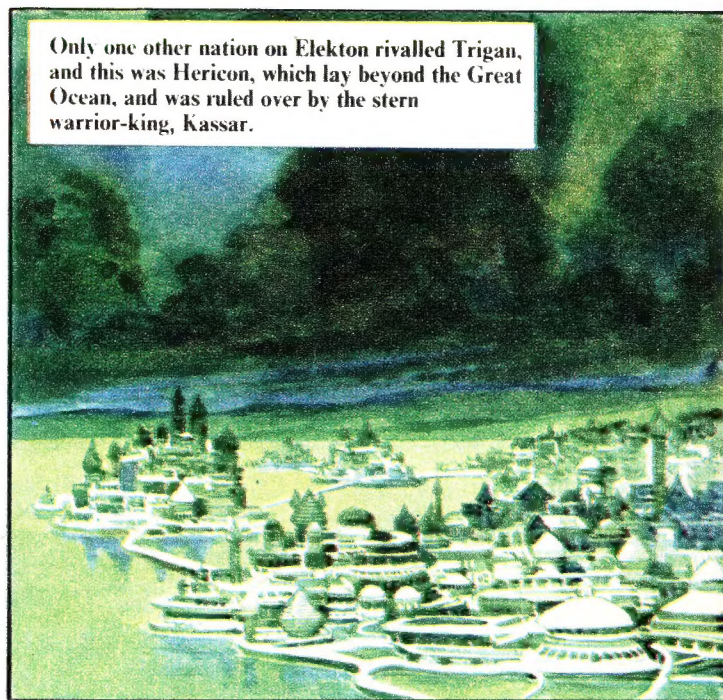
**BEGIN READING THIS EXCITING
NEW STORY TODAY!**

Far from our world is the galaxy of Yarna, and in that galaxy is the planet Elekton. The largest continent of Elekton is Victris, where, in the land of Vorg, stands the city of Trigan, heart of a growing empire.

Under the rule of her leader Trigo, the Trigan Empire grew from strength to strength and her air fleets increased in numbers . . .



Only one other nation on Elekton rivalled Trigan, and this was Hericon, which lay beyond the Great Ocean, and was ruled over by the stern warrior-king, Kassar.



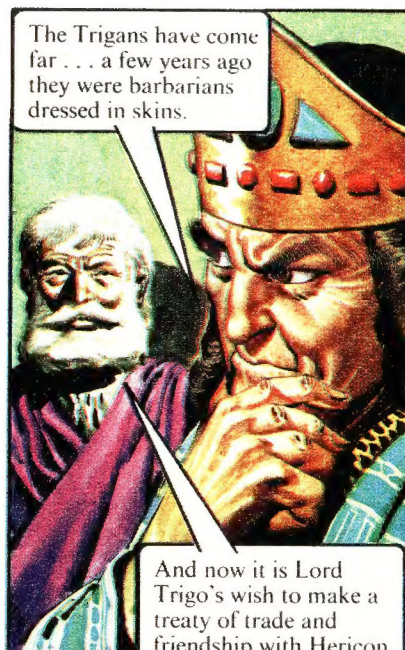
One day, envoys from Trigan arrived at the court of King Kassar.



So . . . you bring a message from Lord Trigo?

Yes, Majesty.

The Trigans have come far . . . a few years ago they were barbarians dressed in skins.



And now it is Lord Trigo's wish to make a treaty of trade and friendship with Hericon.

Kassar was a cautious man. Not for many months was the treaty completed and signed with great ceremony . . .



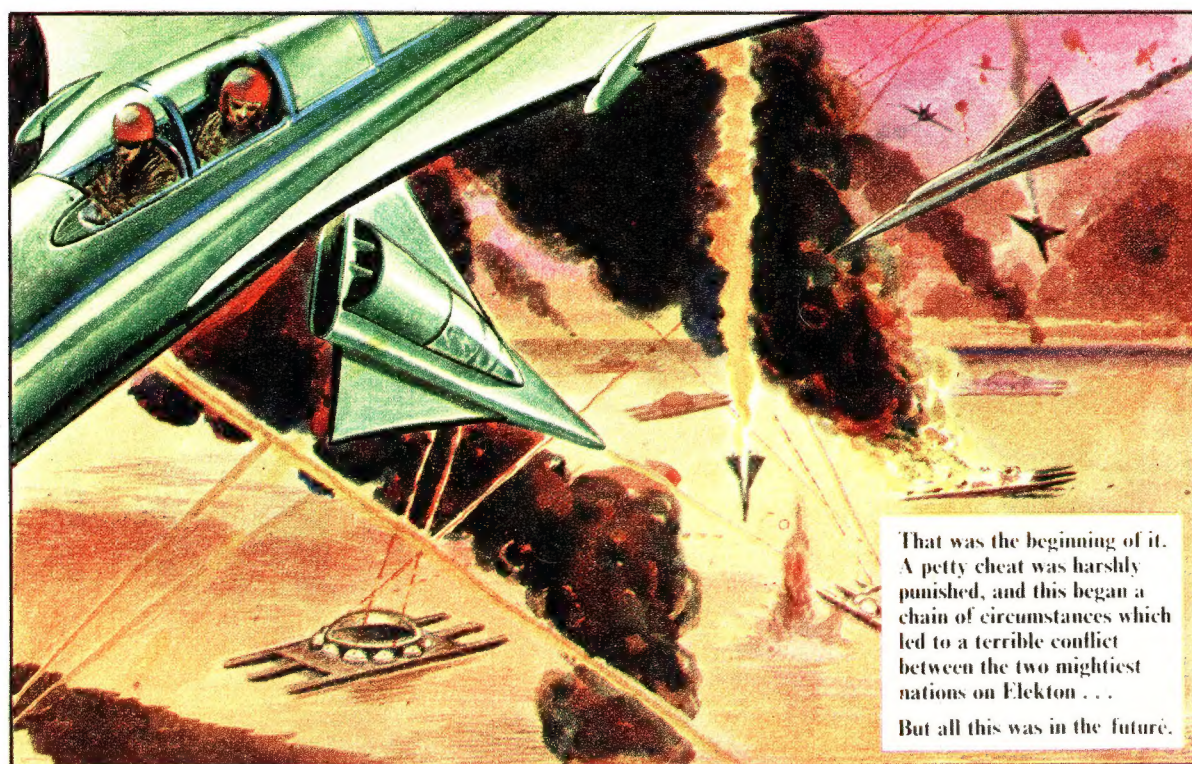
My sister the Lady Ursa will accompany you back to Trigan and give my greetings to Lord Trigo.

Lord Trigo will be greatly honoured, Majesty.

And so the Lady Ursa travelled to Trigan, but it was many years before she saw her own country again. for, six months later, she and Trigo were married.



Thanks to the treaty, trade began to flourish between the two countries. Every day, mighty cargo-carrying atmosphere craft and humble trading vessels crossed the Great Ocean.

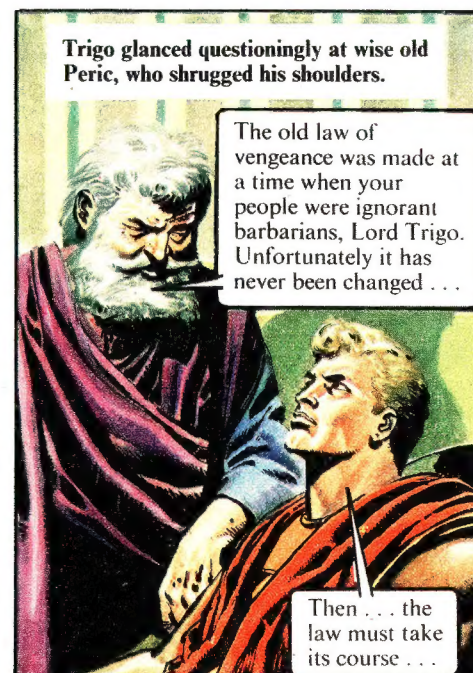
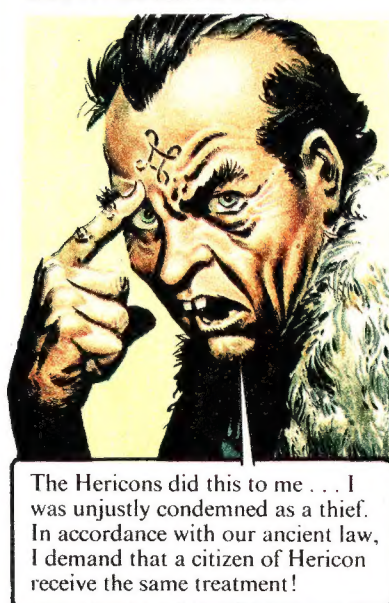


The RISE and FALL of the TRIGAN EMPIRE

On the face of it, all seems well between the Trigan Empire and the other great nation of the planet Elekton, Hericon. Trigo, the ruler of Trigan, has married the sister of the King of Hericon, and the two countries have made a treaty of trade and friendship. But a rascally Trigan trader named Yenni is about to end all that . . .



Yenni pointed to the livid brand on his brow . . . the mark of a thief.

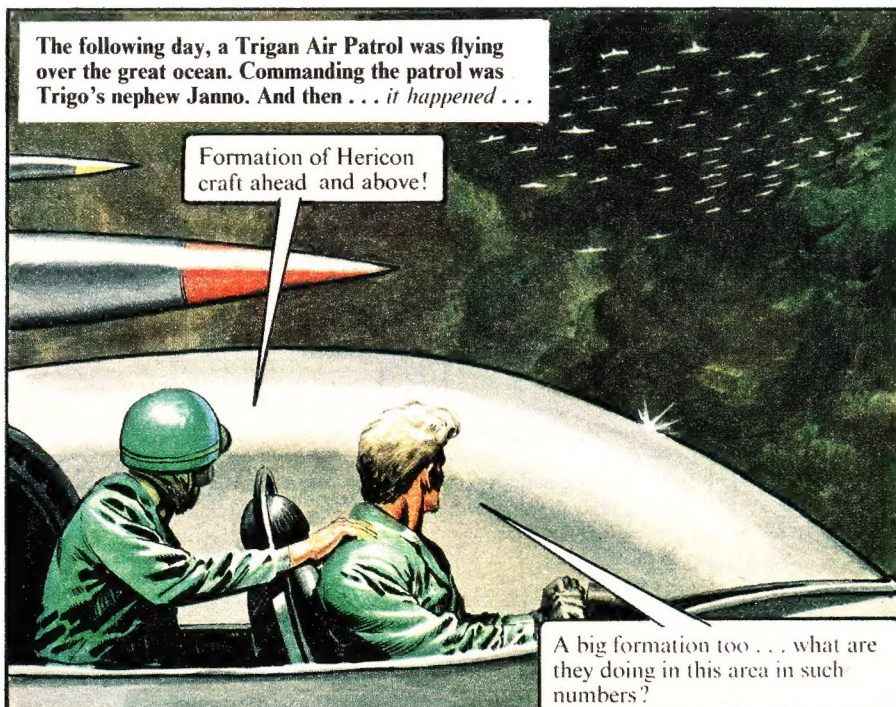


Days later, news of the man's fate was brought to King Kassar of Hericon, whose stern face darkened with fury.



When the story of the imprisonment of the six men reached Trigo, a furious mob gathered, and it was Yenni who incited them to the violence that followed.





Without warning, the massed formation dived down upon the handful of Trigan craft!



The RISE and FALL of the TRIGAN EMPIRE

Thanks to the scheming hatred of a rascally Trigan trader, war has broken out between the two greatest nations on the planet Elekton, the Trigan empire and the country of Hericon . . .

An unevenly-matched battle raged over the great ocean. Three Trigan atmosphere craft against a massed air fleet of Hericon.

Trigo's nephew Janno felt a sudden breath-robbing jolt as his craft received its death-blow. Next instant, he was being carried towards the wave-lashed ocean.

When his head broke surface, he saw the Hericon Air Fleet forming up to disappear over the horizon. But of his comrades and their craft there was no sign.

The craft struck, and sank like a rock. Janno fought his way out of his harness and kicked open the hatchway. With lungs near to bursting, he squirmed clear . . .

Curs! Treacherous Hericon curs!

The suns of Elekton were dipping low before a Force from Trigan came in answer to the call he had made. And he was picked up . . . the only survivor of the patrol.

Already the alarm had been raised in Trigan. And Trigo was holding a hastily-assembled Council of War with his captains.

So . . . it's war, then! And if I know my brether-in-law, King Kassar, it will be war till one or other of our countries is hammered to dust!

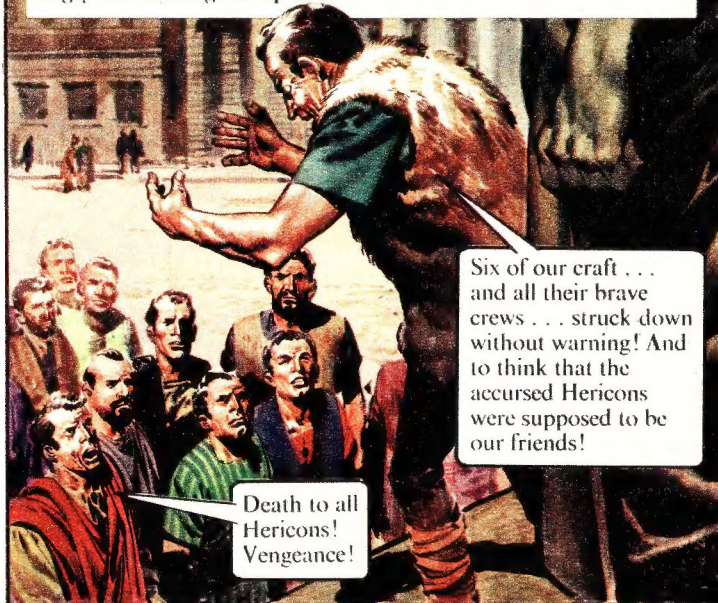
Turning, he saw his wife, the Lady Ursa.



Trigo . . . What can I say? I am a Hericon . . . your enemy!

You were born a Hericon, Ursa . . . But you are now my Queen, and a Trigan!

News of the disaster in the great ocean was all over the city of Trigan, and the cause of it all—the rascal Yenni— was addressing an angry mob in the great square.



Six of our craft . . . and all their brave crews . . . struck down without warning! And to think that the accursed Hericons were supposed to be our friends!

Death to all Hericons! Vengeance!



Aye! Death to the Hericons . . . and death to the Hericon woman up there in the palace . . . the woman who calls herself the Queen of Trigan!

Incited to fury by Yenni, the mob stormed Trigo's palace, breaking down the great gates, and hurling aside the guards who tried to stop them.



Bring out the Hericon woman!

From an upper window, Trigo saw them coming.



Trigo . . . they are calling my name!

Be calm . . . nothing can harm you!

When the mob reached the inner stair, they found their way blocked by a handful of guards . . . and Trigo himself with a drawn sword.



What do you want here?

Stand aside, Lord Trigo. Our quarrel is not with you . . . But with the Hericon woman you married!

Trigo tossed his sword down the stairs, and it fell with a clatter to the courtyard below. And then . . . he bared his chest . . .

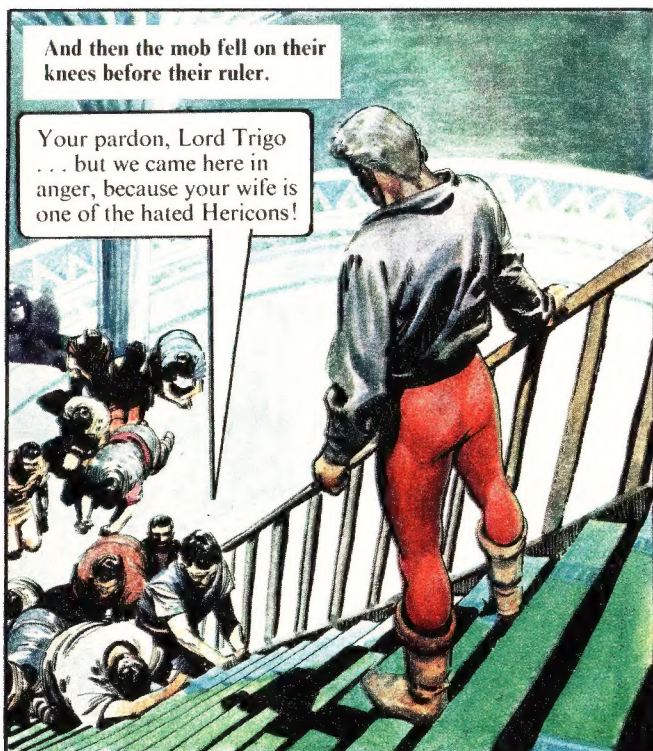


Very well . . . But you must first kill me! Now . . . Which of you is going to strike the fatal blow?

Next Week: Tragedy for the Lady Ursa

The RISE and FALL of the TRIGAN EMPIRE

Thanks to the scheming of a rascally Trigan named Yenni, war has broken out on the planet Elekton between the Trigan Empire and the country of Hericon. Now, Yenni has let a mob into the Palace to seize the wife of their ruler, Trigo, because she is a Hericon . . .



From the top of the staircase, the Lady Ursa heard . . .



Furious, they fell upon the rascally Yenni and dragged him from the palace.



And they cast him out of the city gates.



Meanwhile, Trigo was racing through the echoing corridors of the palace, calling his wife's name . . .

Ursa! . . . Ursa, where are you? . . . Answer me!



But—shrouded in a concealing cloak—Ursa was already making her way out of one of the side gates of Trigan.



She made her way across the boulder strewn plain beyond. And then—suddenly—she saw a dark form rising ahead of her!

Who . . . who is that?

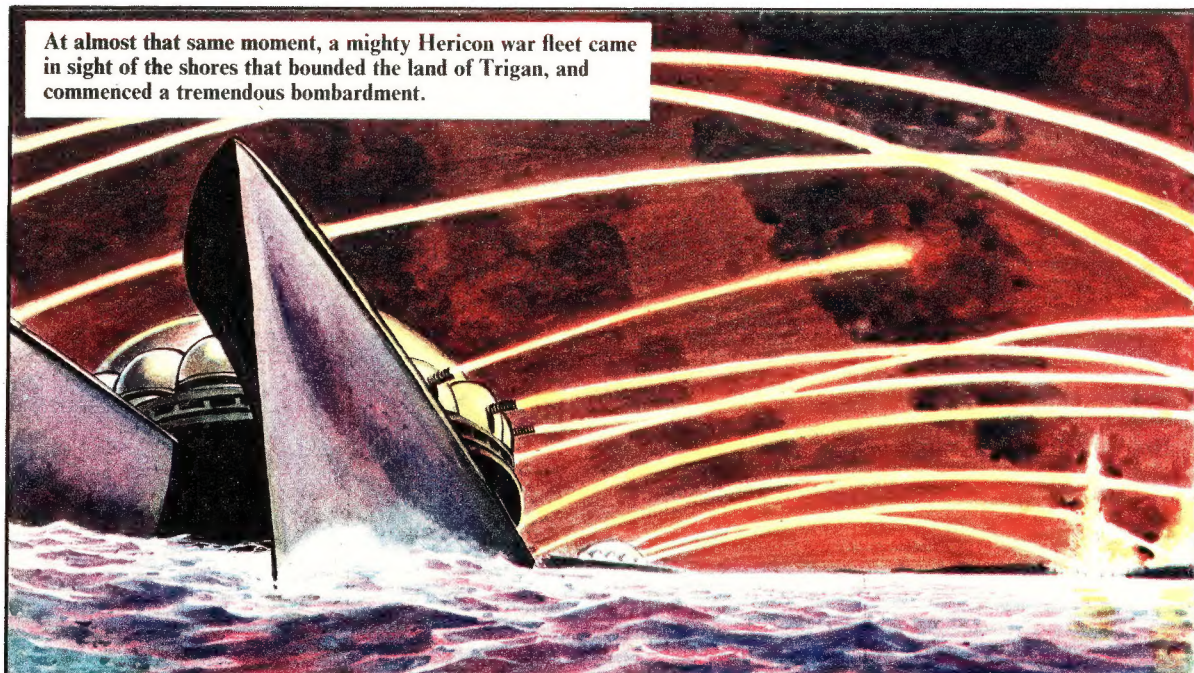


And then . . . she recognised the man who crept menacingly towards her!



No! Don't come near me! . . . No!

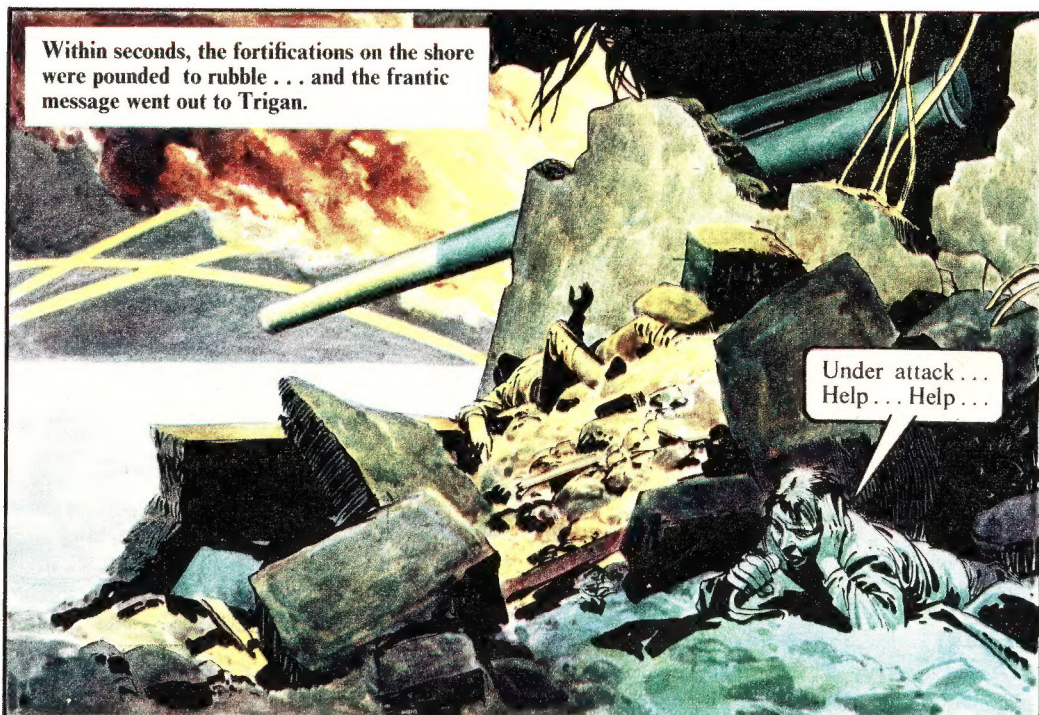
At almost that same moment, a mighty Hericon war fleet came in sight of the shores that bounded the land of Trigan, and commenced a tremendous bombardment.



And then the night was riven with lurid flame!



Within seconds, the fortifications on the shore were pounded to rubble . . . and the frantic message went out to Trigan.



The RISE and FALL of the TRIGAN EMPIRE

Thanks to the scheming hatred of a rascally Trigan named Yenni, war has broken out between the two greatest nations on the planet Elekton—the Trigan Empire, and the country of Hericon. Two things happen in swift succession: Ursa, the Hericon-born wife of Trigo, disappears—and a Hericon sea fleet appears off the shores of Trigan.

For what seemed like an eternity, the Hericon fleet poured flame and destruction upon the soil of the Trigan Empire.

And then . . . clear in the light of Elekton's moons . . . swooping to the attack came a Trigan air fleet!

Each craft will select its own target, and press home the attack regardless of cost!

In desperate haste, the Hericon gunners switched their sights to the oncoming atmosphere craft . . . many were hit, but the rest came on . . .

The proud flagship of the Hericon fleet was holed below water, and sank at full speed . . .

Within a short space of time it was all over . . . of the Hericon sea fleet, nothing remained but pieces of floating wreckage and swimming men . . . as for the Trigan atmosphere craft . . .

. . . One pilot alone returned to the city of Trigan and made his report to Trigo.

Lord Trigo, I have the honour to tell you that the Hericon fleet is destroyed . . . and I am the only survivor of the force that destroyed it . . .

You are wounded, lad . . .

Trigo was present when they lifted the gravely-wounded pilot from his shell-riven cockpit . . . and he heard the terrible news . . .

The Hericons have landed!

It was true! . . . Even at that moment airborne shock-troops of Hericon were soaring to the ground from mighty troop carriers, less than an hour's march from the city!

The invasion of the Trigan Empire had begun, and King Kassar of Hericon himself was in command.

The left wing of our forces will drive towards the city . . . So! . . . and the right wing will do the same . . . So!

A pincer movement, majesty! . . . Excellent!

Suddenly there was a scuffle . . . and a grotesquely-painted figure was dragged into the presence of the king.

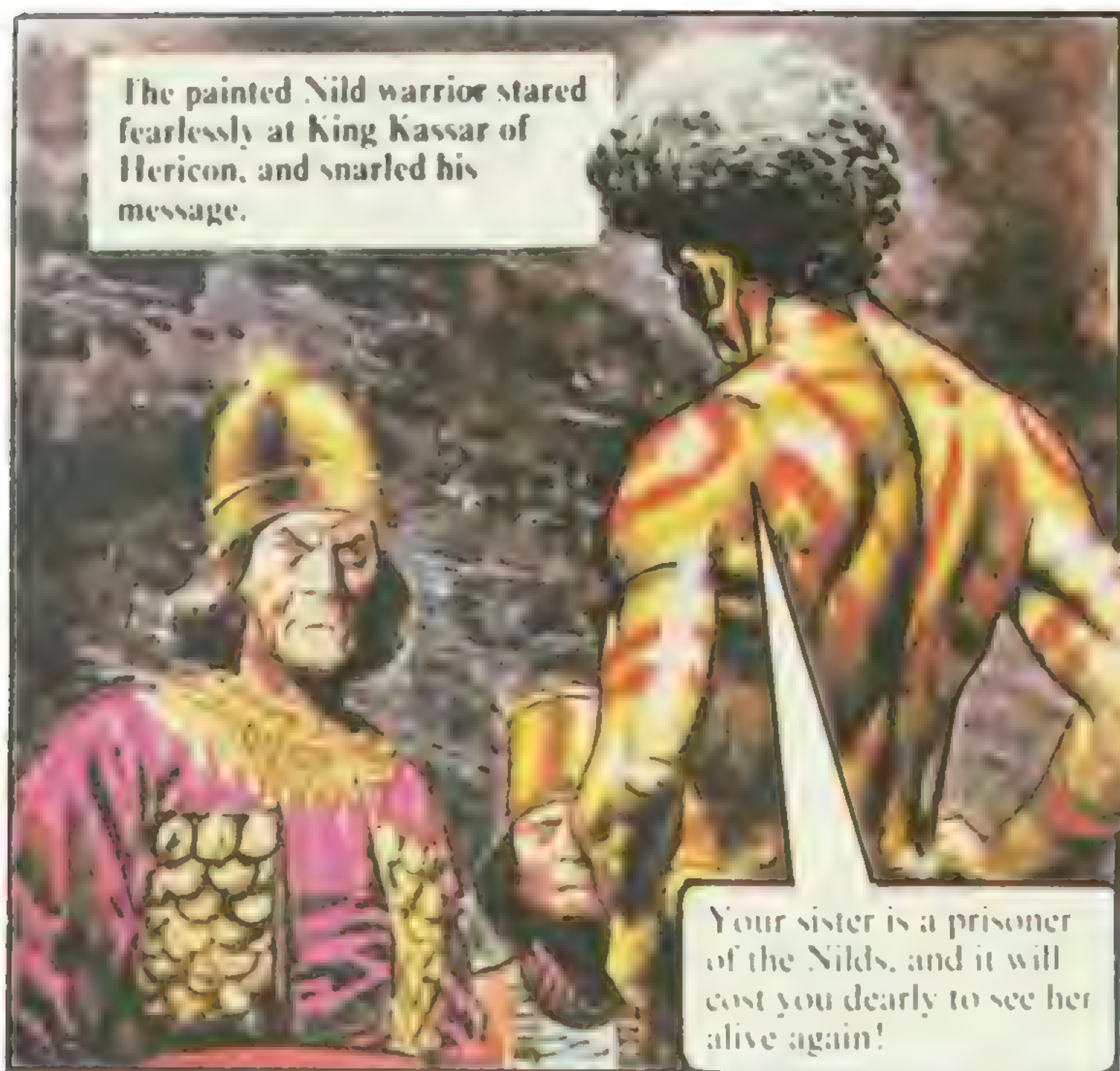
The Nild fumbled in the folds of his garb . . . and threw something at Kassar's feet

Feast your eyes on . . . this!

What's this? Who is that barbarian?

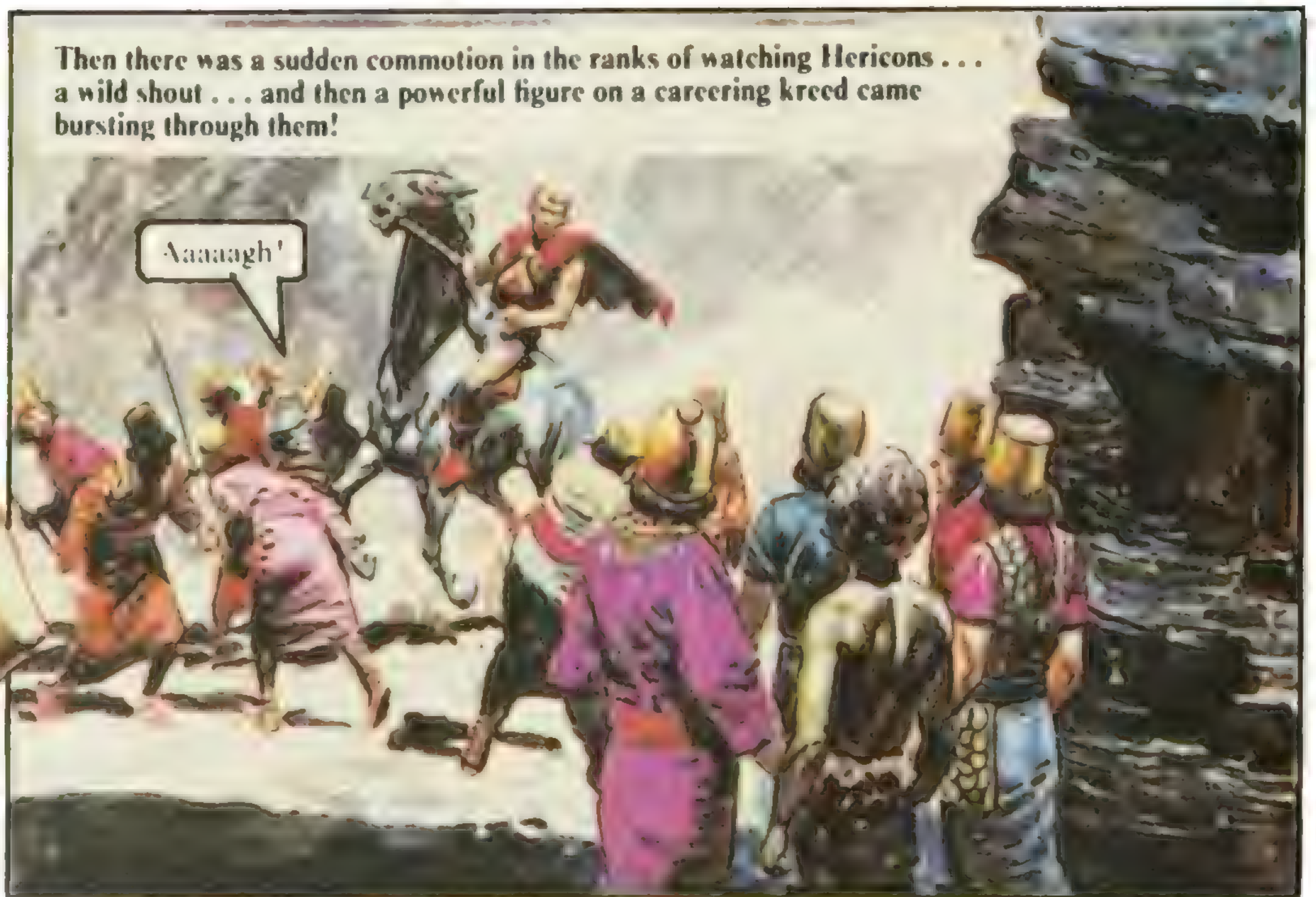
We found him lurking near our outposts, majesty . . . he claims to have a message for you!

By all the stars! . . . It is the medallion I gave to my sister Ursa, which she swore never to remove from her neck! How did you get your foul hands on it, savage? . . . Speak, you painted cur!



The painted Nild warrior stared fearlessly at King Kassar of Hericon, and snarled his message.

Your sister is a prisoner of the Nilds, and it will cost you dearly to see her alive again!



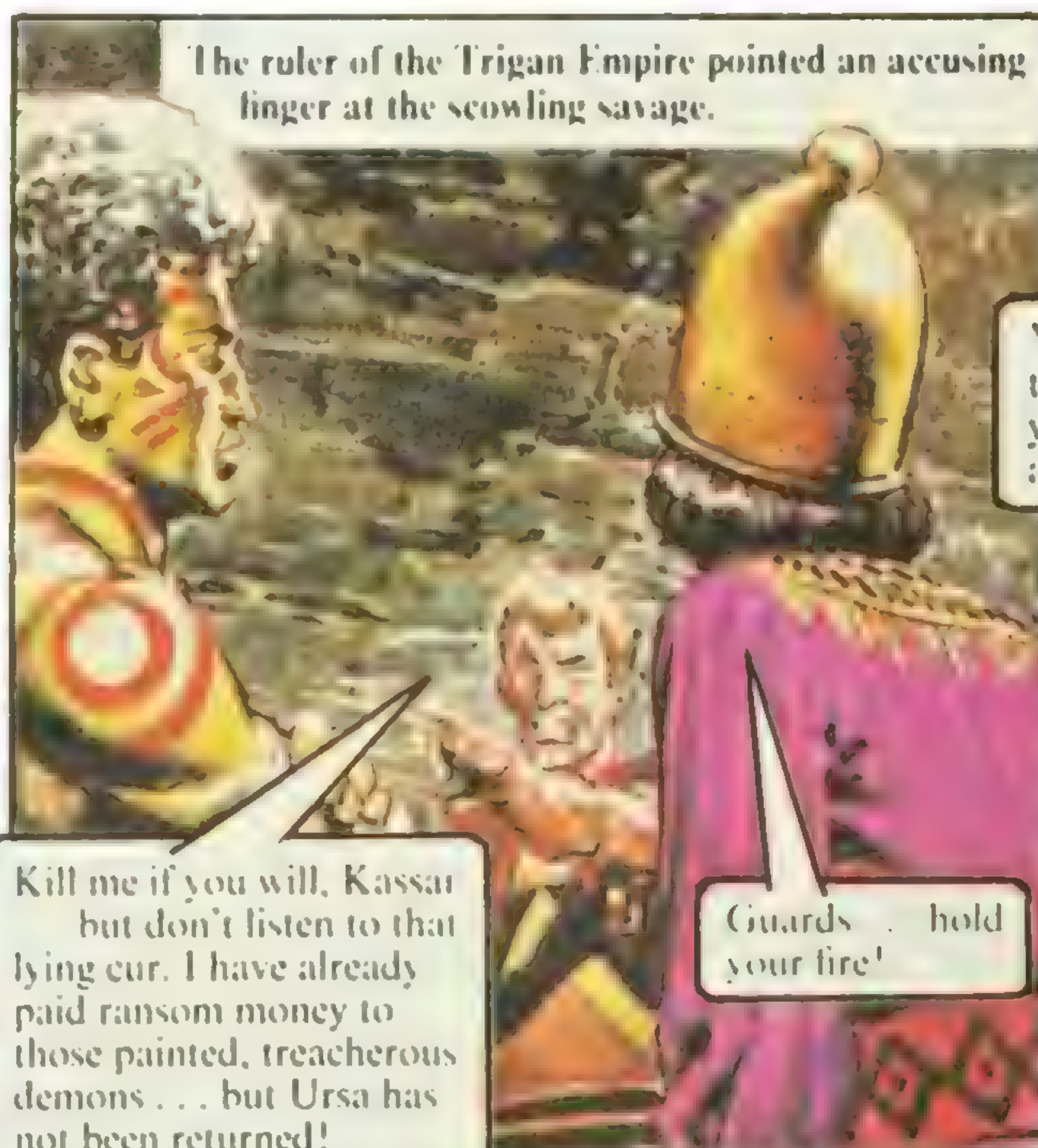
Then there was a sudden commotion in the ranks of watching Hericons . . . a wild shout . . . and then a powerful figure on a careering breed came bursting through them!

Aaaaagh!



It was Trigo! He sprang lithely to the ground, disregarding the rows of levelled weapons aimed at him, he approached King Kassar.

Trigo! . . . He must be mad to come here . . . cut him down!



The ruler of the Trigan Empire pointed an accusing finger at the scowling savage.

Kill me if you will, Kassar but don't listen to that lying cur. I have already paid ransom money to those painted, treacherous demons . . . but Ursa has not been returned!

Guards . . . hold your fire!



You risked almost certain death to ride here . . . the camp of your country's enemies . . . to tell me this?

You forget, Kassar, that Ursa is not only your sister . . . she is also my wife!



King Kassar looked out, black-browed with fury, over the might of his army . . .

All this force at my command, and I can do nothing to save her! . . . the instant the Nilds were aware of our approach, Ursa would die!

An army would be sighted immediately . . . but not one man!



You mean . . . ?

. . . or two men, perhaps!

Minutes later, Trigo and Kassar were riding side-by-side through the massed Hericon ranks, and every eye watched them go.

You have brought a great force against the Trigan Empire!

Yes! and when Ursa is safe, I shall use this force to smash your precious empire to the dust!



They headed across the plain of Vorg towards the great mountain barrier that was the hunting ground of the Nild tribe. Towards nightfall they came in sight of the towering mass of craggy rock.



Leaving their kreds at the foothills, the two men began the ascent of a steep pass that scored into the heart of the mountains . . . and then . . .

Do you hear that?

Drums! . . . We're nearing their camp!



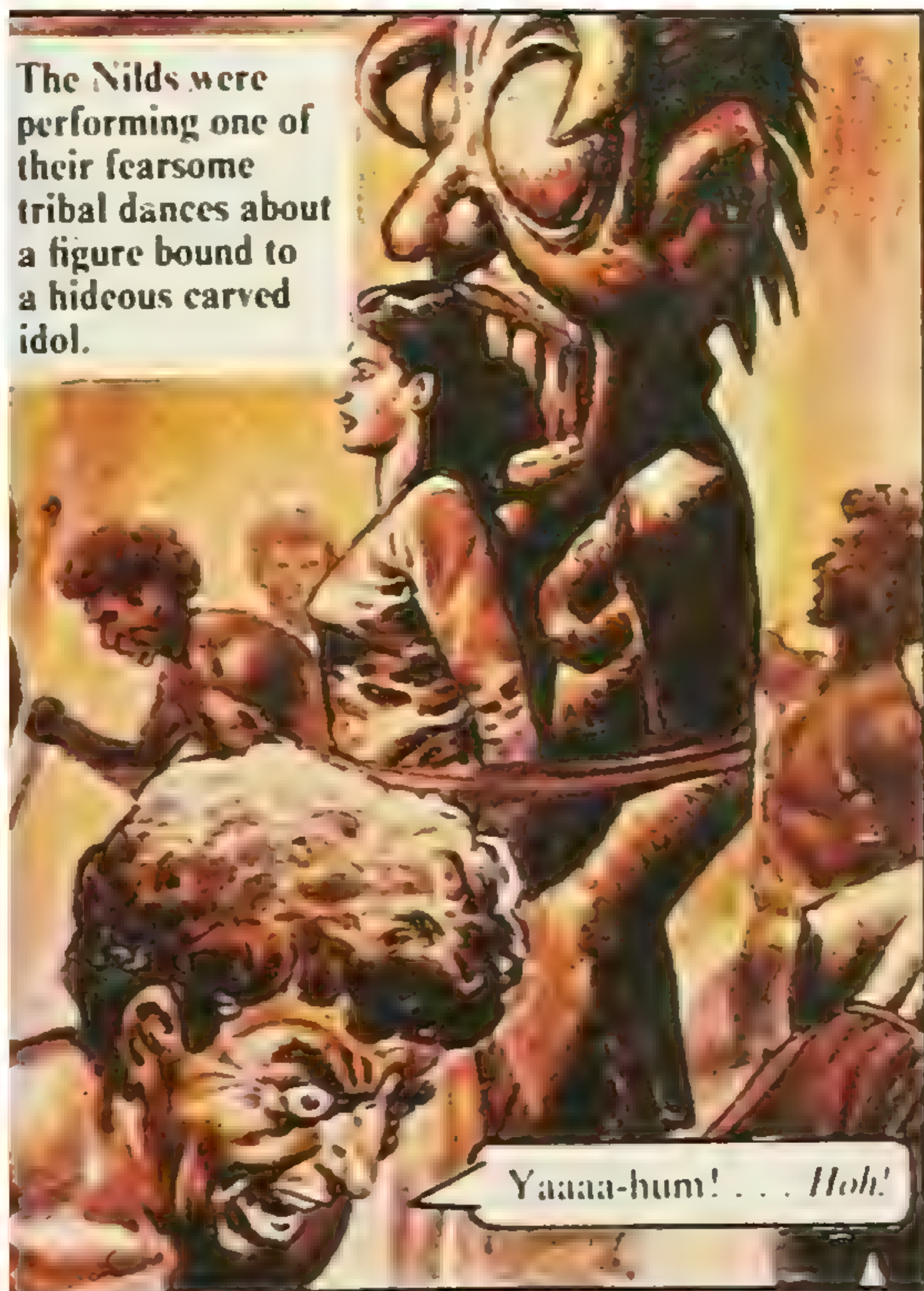
They scaled a wall of rock, and looked down on to a wild and barbaric scene . . .

I see her!
I see Ursa!

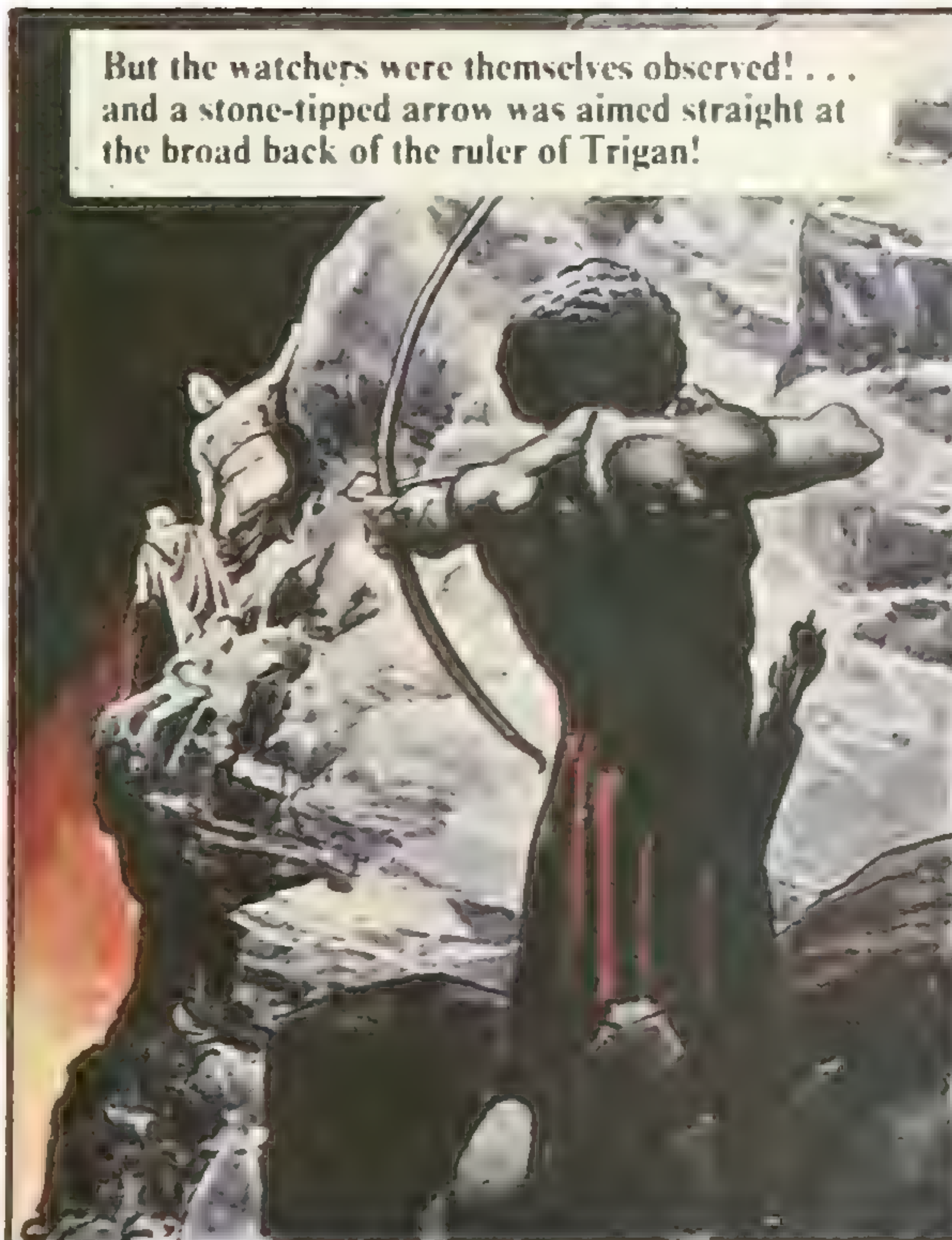


The Nilds were performing one of their fearsome tribal dances about a figure bound to a hideous carved idol.

Yaaaa-hum! . . . Hoh!

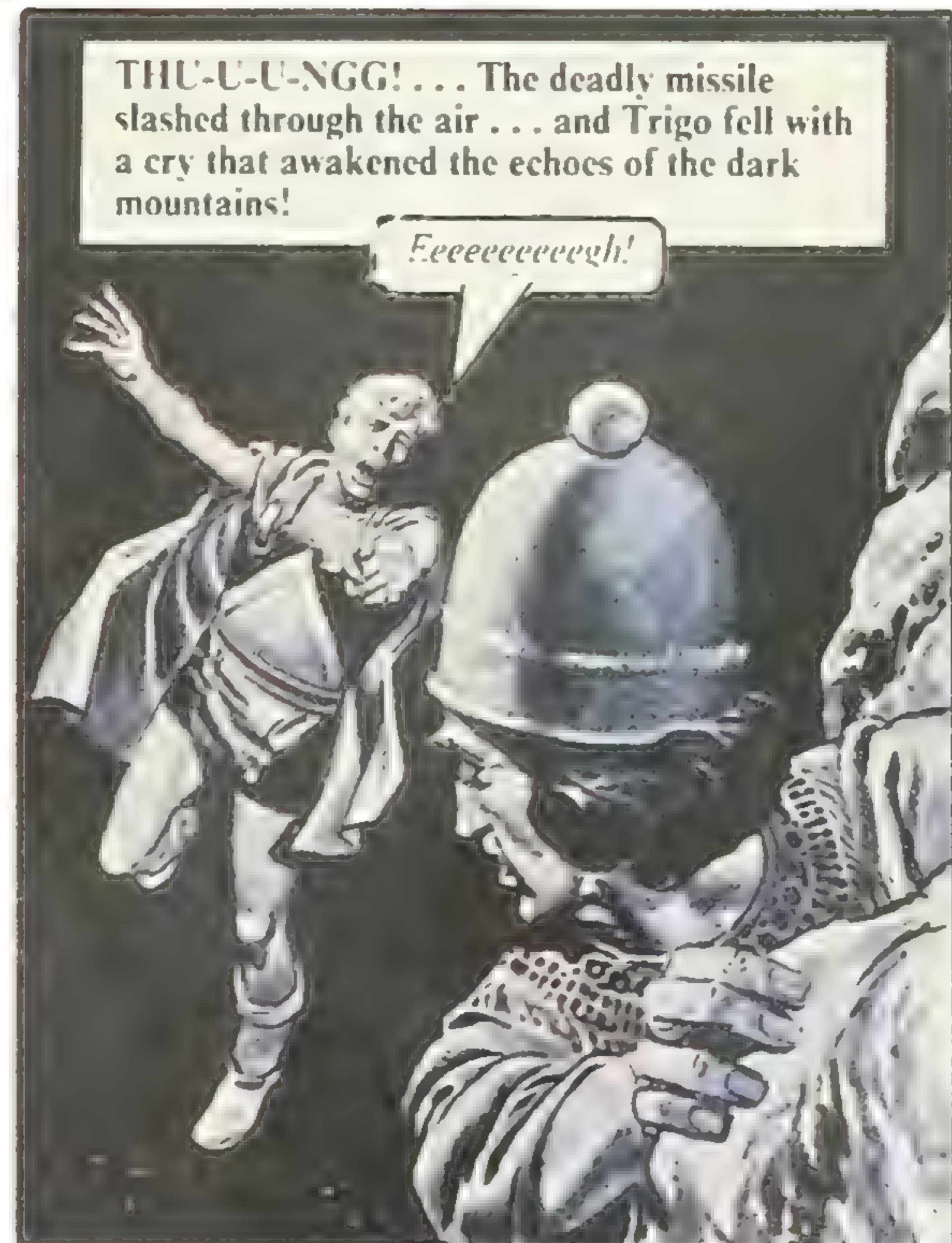


But the watchers were themselves observed! . . . and a stone-tipped arrow was aimed straight at the broad back of the ruler of Trigan!



THU-U-UNGG! . . . The deadly missile slashed through the air . . . and Trigo fell with a cry that awakened the echoes of the dark mountains!

Eeeeeeevgh!





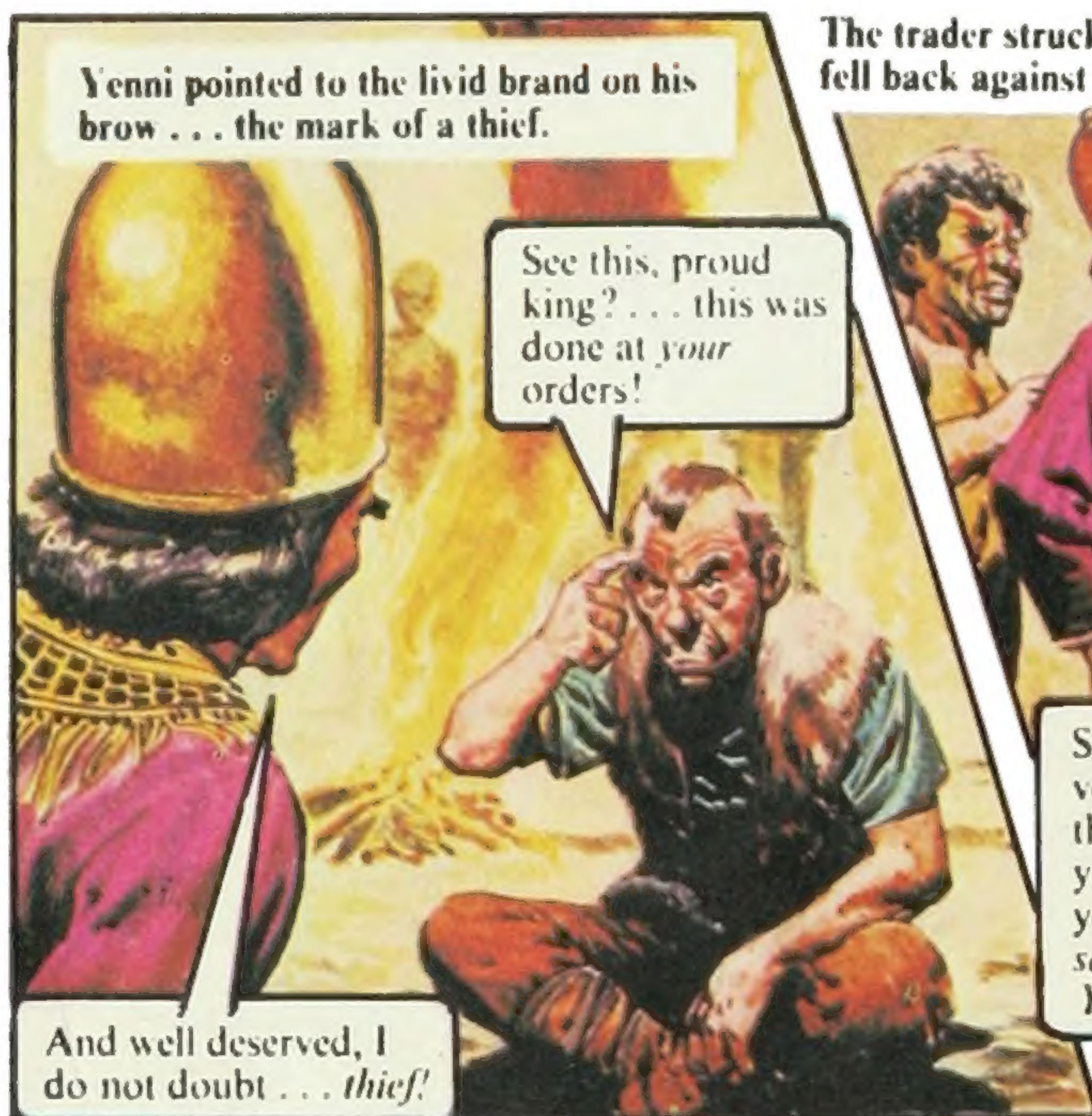
The alarm was raised, and Kassar found himself facing a line of levelled weapons.

It is Kassar of Hericon!



They dragged him down to the camp, where the treacherous Trigan trader Yenni sat amongst the Elders of the Nilds.

Ah! . . . this is a happy moment . . . the moment of my vengeance!



Yenni pointed to the livid brand on his brow . . . the mark of a thief.

See this, proud king? . . . this was done at *your* orders!

And well deserved, I do not doubt . . . thief!

The trader struck Kassar a cowardly blow . . . and the ruler of Hericon fell back against the warriors who held him.



Silence! . . . my vengeance demands that you perish, and your sister Ursa with you. *You will be sacrificed to the sacred Yalt of the Nilds!*

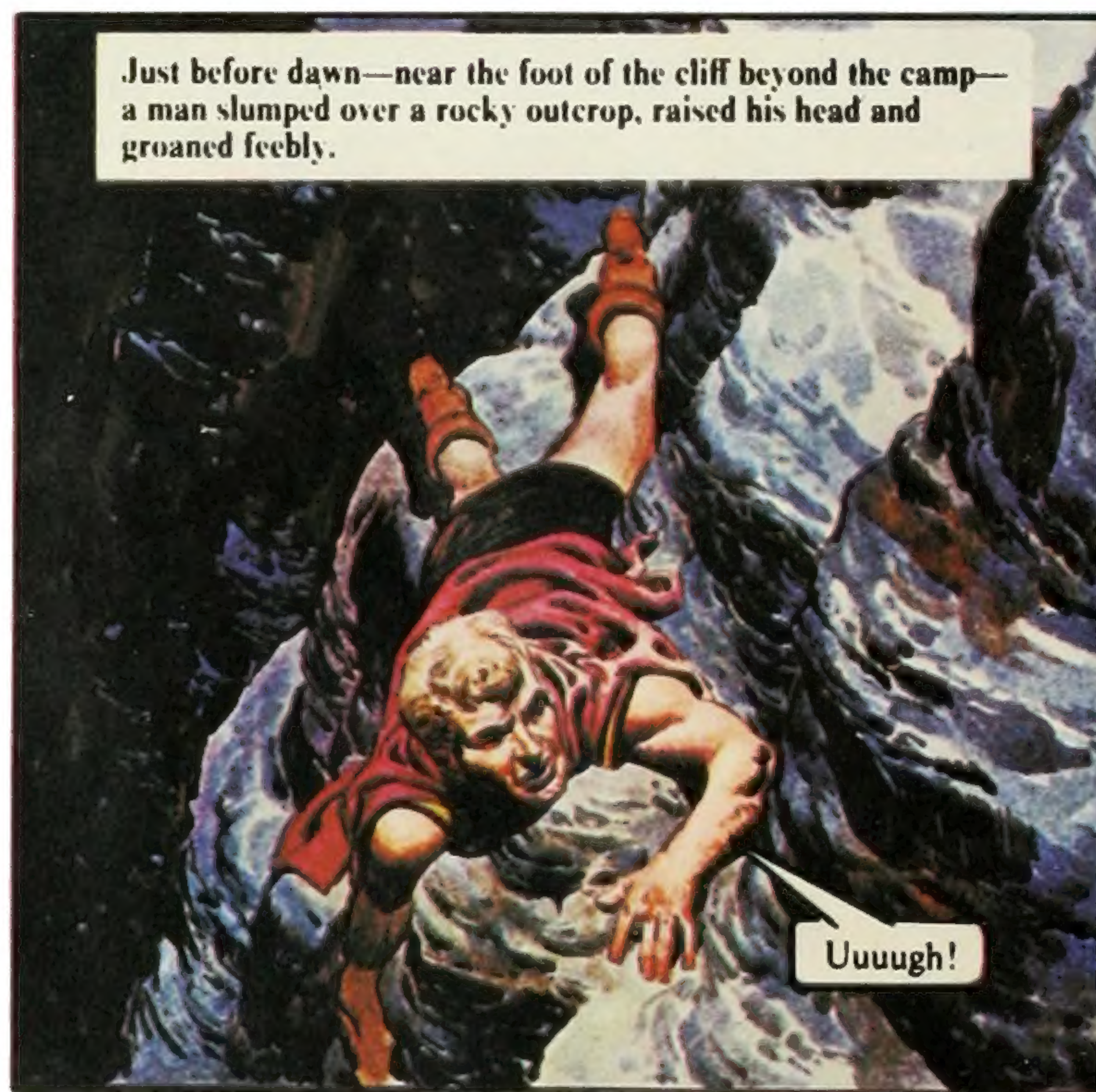


Yenni pointed to a cage, where a sabre-toothed beast growled with savage fury . . .

I have gained enough treasure from Trigo to enable me to live in luxury all my days. The Nilds have no use for treasure . . . they will be well satisfied with two sacrifices for the sacred Yalt!



And so Kassar was dragged to the idol and bound with his sister. Then the savage dancing was resumed with redoubled frenzy. It was fated to go on till dawn . . . till the rising suns of Elekton brought the hour of sacrifice.



Just before dawn—near the foot of the cliff beyond the camp—a man slumped over a rocky outcrop, raised his head and groaned feebly.

Uuuugh!

Trigo lived! Staunching the arrow wound in his shoulder, he raised himself up and looked about him.

What demon's work goes on in the camp of the Nilds?

With the suns of Elekton bathing the encampment in their lurid glare, the Nilds clambered to a safe position above the sacred circle.

Let the sacred Yalt be released!

There was a scuffle . . . and all eyes turned to see the powerful figure of Trigo leaping down into the circle.



A Nild sentry looked down from on high and grinned savagely . . . all unaware of the figure creeping towards him!



Long live the Trigan Empire!



Crouching, he faced the oncoming Yalt, with the rising suns glinting from his levelled blade.

Trigo!

Courage, Ursa!



Yenni's voice rose in a screech of fury . . .

Shoot him down!

No! . . . It is written that only the Yalt may destroy those who tread within its sacred circle!



With a deep-throated roar of fury, the Yalt leaped at Trigo, smashing the sword from his hand with a sweep of a mighty, taloned claw.



Next instant, the ruler of the Trigan Empire was underneath the massive body . . . and the sabre teeth were lunging for his throat.



The watching Nilds nodded with satisfaction, and the treacherous Yenni grinned with evil glee.



Then a gasp of surprise rose from the watchers, as Trigo squirmed free of the Yalt and rolled towards the open door of its cage, where he hurled defiance at the snarling beast.

Why do you wait, Yalt? . . . Leap! . . . Leap and finish it!



The Yalt made its leap . . . but Trigo was ready . . . throwing himself flat . . . and the Yalt's impetus carried it on towards the cage door!



In a trice, Trigo snatched up his sword and severed the rope that held the door . . . it fell, imprisoning the infuriated beast . . . and then Trigo called out to the watching Nilds.



To the barbaric Nilds, the sabre-toothed killer was a god. And the elders of the tribe pleaded in wild desperation.

Behold! . . . One thrust and your sacred Yalt dies!

Trigo! . . . No!

Spare the sacred Yalt!



Put down your sword and you may go free . . . and your companions with you!



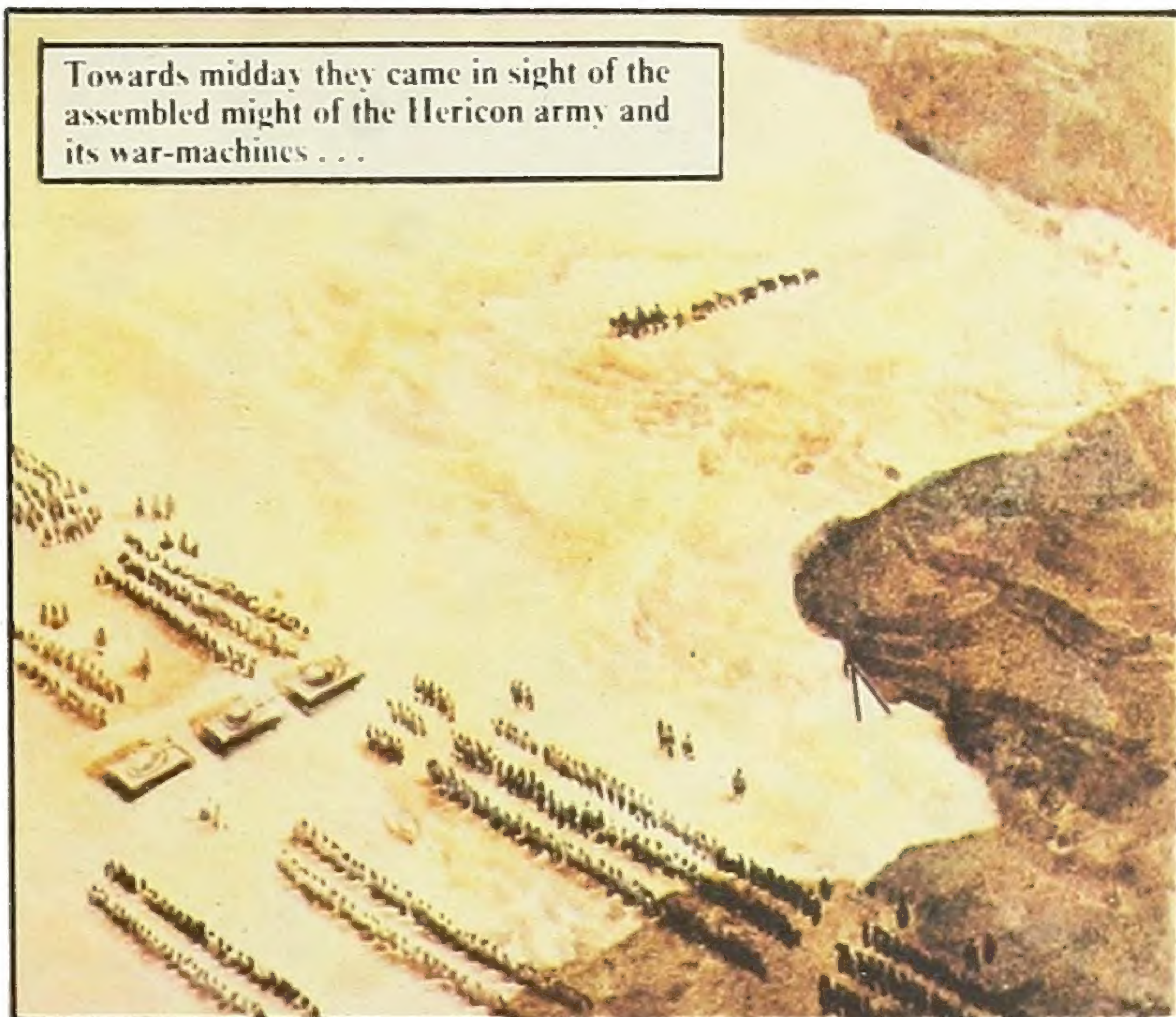
Only Yenni's voice was raised in protest . . . but the Nilds had no time for him now.

Have you taken leave of your senses? . . . You cannot let these prisoners go free!

They go! . . . And you will go with them! Your presence has brought evil fortune to our tribe, and nearly cost us the sacred Yalt!



And so, Trigo, Ursa and King Kassar rode from the barren hills across the Plain of Vorg . . . taking with them Ursa's ransom, for which the primitive Nilds had no use . . . and Yenni as their prisoner.



Towards midday they came in sight of the assembled might of the Hericon army and its war-machines . . .



Trigo's fine eyes were fixed gravely on Kassar as the Hericon generals jubilantly greeted their King . . .

His Majesty has returned!

The truce is over, say the word and your army marches to the destruction of Trigan City!



Kassar turned to face Trigo . . . and there was a ghost of a smile on his stern face.

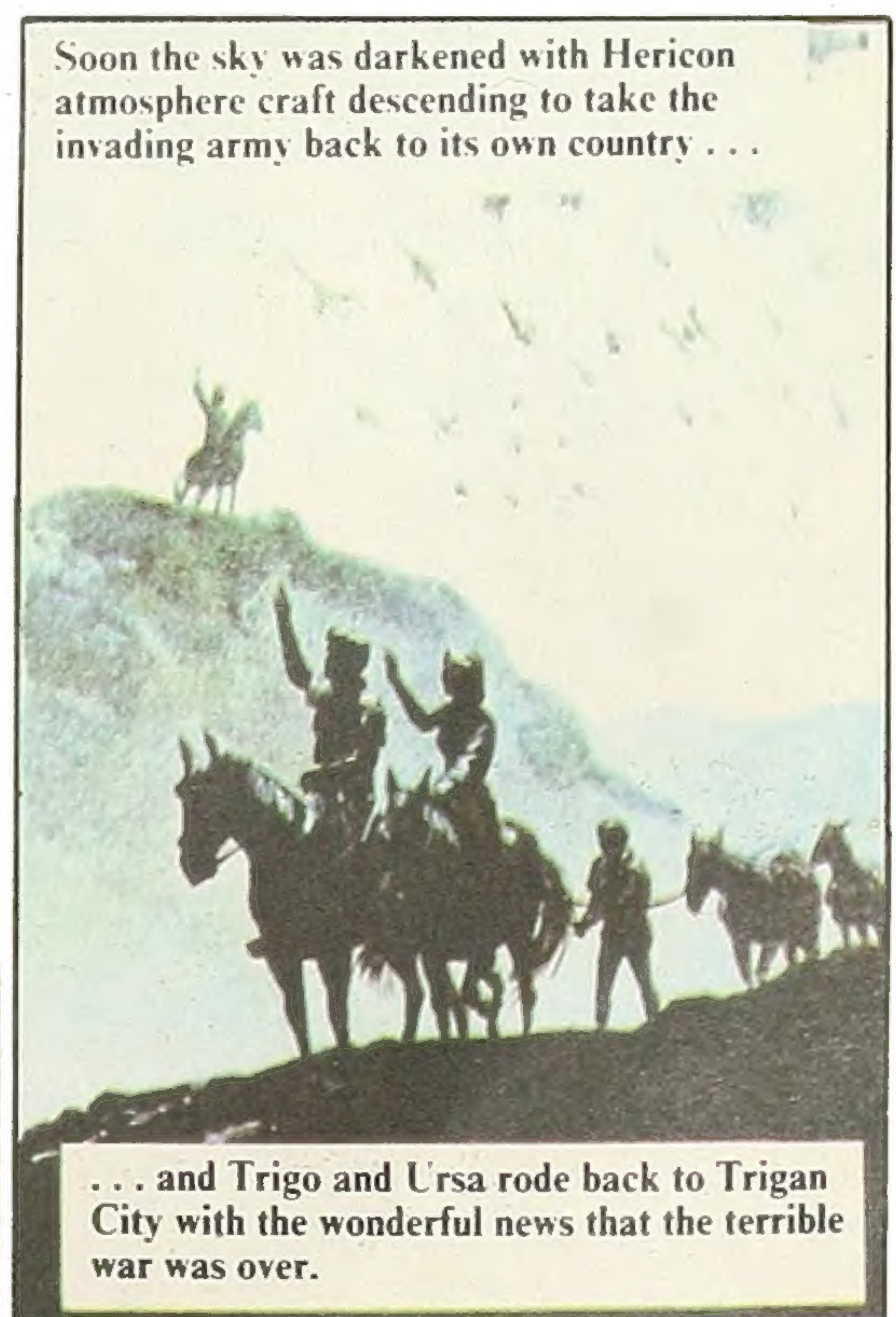
The truce is over . . . and so is the war!

Kassar . . . You mean . . . ?



The rulers of the two greatest nations on the planet Elekton clasped each other's hands.

I am not a man who makes friends easily, Trigo . . . but I am proud to have such a fearless and valiant warrior for a brother-in-law. This war should never have begun . . . let us see that it never happens again!



Soon the sky was darkened with Hericon atmosphere craft descending to take the invading army back to its own country . . .

. . . and Trigo and Ursa rode back to Trigan City with the wonderful news that the terrible war was over.